



TIPS for Shopping at the Home Improvement Store

BUYING & USING SAFER DIY PRODUCTS

CHOOSE SAFER PRODUCTS

- ✓ Read labels:
 - Avoid products labeled “poison” or “danger”
 - Avoid products with strong chemicals such as benzene and methylene chloride
 - Avoid products with a strong odor
- ✓ Avoid aerosol products
- ✓ Look for products with less toxic ingredients such as latex, water-based, low VOCs
- ✓ Buy only enough product for the job
- ✓ Make your own whenever possible (see “recipes” at the end of this document)

USE SAFELY

- ✓ Use according to directions
- ✓ Wear personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves and goggles
- ✓ Open windows and doors, run exhaust fans
- ✓ Keep all products in their original containers
- ✓ Store products away from children.

DISPOSE of SAFELY

- ✓ Read instructions for proper disposal
- ✓ Never pour toxic products down the drain
- ✓ Bring any toxic products to your local Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) site for disposal: www.ct.gov/dep/hhw

ALTERNATIVES and DIY RECIPES

- **Windshield Cleaner:** Club soda. Spray on the windshield and wipe dry. Not recommended for use in the vehicle's windshield-spray reservoir because it could freeze.
- **BBQ cleaner:** ¼ cup washing soda, 1 gallon warm water. Dissolve washing soda in warm water. Saturate a sponge with the mixture and wipe down BBQ areas that need de-greasing. Rinse homemade cleaner off thoroughly. Excess should not be stored -- discard all leftovers.
- **Vinyl Smell Reducer and Natural Engine Degreaser:** ¼ cup washing soda, 1 gallon warm water. Dissolve washing soda in warm water. Saturate a sponge with the mixture and wash the vinyl or pour on engine areas that need de-greasing. Rinse homemade degreaser off thoroughly. Excess should not be stored -- discard all leftovers.
- **Insect Repellant:** liquid dishwashing soap and water or vinegar
- **Furniture Polish:** use olive oil or vegetable-based polishes
- **Moth Ball Alternative:** Place cedar chips or blocks in desired area.

Air clothes well in the sun; store in airtight containers, and scatter sachets of lavender, cedar chips, or dried tobacco in with clothing.

- **Upholstery Cleaner and Rug Shampoo:** 4 cups water, 1 cup white vinegar, 3 tablespoons sodium lauryl sulfate, 2 teaspoons baking soda, 1 teaspoon lavender essential oil (optional), 1 teaspoon ginger essential oil (optional). Mix all ingredients together and fill a hand-held rug/upholstery shampoo bottle half full. Shake the bottle vigorously and shampoo furniture using small circular motions. Scrub area well.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services: [Household Products Database](#) – Health & Safety Information on Household Products